

been of humble lineage. What arrogance, then, to boast of mere "blood"! "I trow that if any surgeon would draw part of their blood in a basin, it would have no better colour than the blood of a plebeian or a mechanic craftsman." Commonalty continues in this downright democratic strain further than space will allow us to follow him. His complaints and arguments are very probably not the mere inventions of the author. He was representing what the common man felt, and even at times said, under his breath perhaps. Such sentiments are as old as oppression itself, and oppression is prehistoric. On the eve of this Reformation period it would be folly indeed to take the poor man in Scotland, or anywhere else, for a dull blockhead who did not reflect on the iniquitous inequality that made his lot little more passable than that of a beast of burden. Rustic wight as he was, he felt that he deserved more consideration in the Commonwealth than he got, and only the mountain load of convention and law kept him from rising, not only against the English invader, whom he professes his eagerness to fight equally with the most bellicose patriot of his age, but against the oppressor nearer home. That our author is not merely transferring his own ideas to his rustic critic of his betters is clear from the fact that he proceeds to answer him in the stock arguments against the democracy with which oppression throughout the ages has defended itself at the poor man's expense. You common people, retorts Dame Scotia, voicing the supercilious class spirit of the day, are not worthy of or fit for liberty. You shout, and follow any loud-voiced prater like a flock of sheep. You are as inconstant as a calm sea in winter. A council of ten prudent men is wiser than that of the whole pack of you. Your judgment has neither consideration nor reason in it. You are as blind men following the blind, and therefore the law forbids you to combine to redress your grievances. Nay, you are worse than brute beasts, for you are given to excess, and subjection alone can curb your brutal instincts. Darne Scotia, however, in the person of our author, is not one-sided, and proceeds to lecture the nobility in very plain-spoken fashion on their degeneracy, and to remind them of the simplicity and virtue of the pristine age of the world. " In the gude ancient dais there was na differance of staitis